

## Commonwealth v. Jesse L. Matthew, Jr. Plea Agreement

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### Terms of Guilty Plea:

Defendant Jesse L. Matthew, Jr. entered guilty pleas to:

- First Degree Murder<sup>1</sup> of Hannah Graham
- Abduction with Intent to Defile<sup>2</sup> Hannah Graham
- First Degree Murder of Morgan Harrington
- Abduction with Intent to Defile Morgan Harrington
- Commonwealth nolle prossed capital murder charge, meaning that the Commonwealth can re-indict for this offense without time limit should the defendant violate the terms of the plea agreement.

### Maximum Sentence for Each Count:

- The defendant agreed and has been sentenced to *4 additional consecutive life sentences*, the statutory maximum for each of these counts

### Waiver of Right to Seek Early, Conditional, Geriatric Release or any Parole:

- There is no parole for offenses committed after 1995. VA Code § 53.1-165.1. Under the previous parole statute, capital offenders sentenced to life in prison were eligible for parole after serving 25 years of their sentence. Va. Code Ann. § 53.1-151(C). Even capital offenders serving multiple life terms were eligible for parole after serving 30 years of their sentence. Va. Code Ann. § 53.1-151(D). While neither are possible under present law, the defendant waives his right to petition for such release
- Individuals convicted of non-capital felonies may petition the Parole Board for conditional geriatric release after having served 5 years AND having reached age 65 OR having served 10 years AND having reached age 60. Va. Ann. Code § 53.1-40.01
- Defendant **explicitly waives** his right to make such a petition as part of his plea and waives his right to any other type of conditional, early release, or parole

### Waiver of Right to Appeal or Withdraw Plea:

- The Defendant waives his right to appeal the decision of the court and his ability to withdraw the plea

### Basis of the Plea:

- Ensures public safety and offender accountability by requiring a guilty plea imposing an additional four consecutive life terms and waiver of any right to early release or parole
- Serves the interests of justice by providing a joint resolution consistent with the wishes of the Graham and Harrington families
- Avoids re-victimization of Hannah and Morgan's friends and families associated with trial
- Provides the families, community, and Commonwealth legal finality and certainty in cases that would have been subject to indefinite appellate process
- Possible only as a result of the professionalism and dedication of law enforcement personnel

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<sup>1</sup> Class 2 Felony, VA Code § 18.2-32; max. life imprisonment/term not less than 20 years

<sup>2</sup> Class 2 Felony, VA Code § 18.2-48; max. life imprisonment/term not less than 20 years